

EPP Buyer Update

Volume 16, July 2005

Clearing the Smoke

New Statewide Contract Helps Reduce Diesel Emissions



Diesel engines are all around us: in trucks, buses, boats, generators, cranes and tractors. The economy cannot function without them, yet they are a major source of particulate and smog-forming pollution and contribute to such health problems as asthma, cancer, strokes, heart attacks and even premature

death. What makes the risks even more significant is that most of these engines are operated where people live, work, walk or go to school.

Even though the U.S. EPA has adopted new, much more stringent, emission standards for diesel engines (to come into effect in 2007), due to long engine life spans and extremely slow equipment turnover, the problem cannot be resolved without reducing the emissions of existing diesel engines. *Continued on Page 2.*

"Try Before You Buy" Pilot Update

The "Surface Safety" Challenge Newton Schools Challenge an EPP Vendor

Last year's EPP Vendor Fair exhibitors offered attendees opportunities to test their products or services in the field at significantly reduced prices or even for free. Now that the warm season is upon us, the time has come for outdoor projects!

One of the lucky winners is the Newton School Department. Surface Safety, Inc., a Medford, MA based provider of non-slip surface coatings offered them to try their product – free of charge. The company offered to install up to 500 square feet of their non-skid coating at any school location – steps, landing, ramp, bathroom, shower – inside or outside. In addition to being fully ADA-compliant, all the coatings are low or no-VOC and most contain recycled-content materials, from recycled rubber to ground-up tennis balls!

After a lot of deliberation, the Newton School Department came up with the challenge: take the cracked concrete steps of the department's headquarters building (see picture) and make them beautiful and... slip-resistant. Will Surface Safety make the client happy? What will the steps look like? Will there be more work for Surface Safety in Newton? Let's wait and see – the results of this pilot along with pictures will be published in the next issue of this newsletter!



New Statewide Contract

Paper, Envelopes & Office Supplies: The State Prefers Recycled!

August 1st, 2005, is the day the new statewide contract **#OFF19, Office Supplies, Recycled Paper and Envelopes**, goes active. In addition to achieving pricing levels that are lower than on previous contracts, OFF19 once again demonstrates the Commonwealth's commitment to supporting markets for recycled content products:

- Note and message pads, calendars, appointment books, files, folders and other supplies with high recycled content (in fact the share of recycled products in the total catalog is now higher!),
- Copy papers with 30% post-consumer recycled content and more – tree-free papers, and 50% and 100% post-consumer papers,
- White and Kraft, plain and printed envelopes with 30% post-consumer recycled content.

In addition to supporting local recycling programs, buying recycled-content paper does a lot to preserve the environment. In Fiscal Year 2004 alone, Commonwealth departments, cities and towns bought nearly 130,000 cases of recycled paper and 300 tons of recycled content office supplies which prevented:

- The same amount of waste as **724 households** would produce in a year,
- The equivalent of the greenhouse gas emissions of **1,400 cars**,
- Harvesting almost **24,000 trees**.

So, keep buying recycled-content paper products – it does make a difference!

Mercury Containing Products

... And What are YOU Doing with Your Mercury-Containing Lamps?

By Lorenzo Macaluso, Center for Ecological Technology (CET)



Mercury is a dangerous heavy metal that causes a host of neurological problems throughout the population, and is especially harmful to children and developing fetuses. According to the Centers for Disease Control, one in ten women of child bearing age has high enough mercury concentrations in her blood to put a fetus at risk.

Nearly every type of light bulb contains mercury, not just straight fluorescent lamps. If your facility uses compact fluorescents, HID's, Sodium Vapor, metal halide, circular/U-tubes, and a host of other mercury containing lamps, they should all be recycled according to state and federal law. In addition, it's good for our air, water and children.

Massachusetts statewide contractors provide competitive pricing and comprehensive services to recycle lighting waste. The contract information is available by searching www.comm-pass.com for the active contract with document number FAC26. Depending on the quantity of lamps you generate, two types of collection programs are available:

- **For small quantities of lamps**, ask about pre-paid shipping programs. The vendor sends you a lamp collection box, and you pack the bulbs, fill out the mailing label and ship it back.
- **For larger quantities of lamps**, the vendors will come to your facility to pick them up.



Recycling spent lamps is a low cost way to comply with state and federal regulations, keep mercury out of the trash, and help make your workplace safer.

The Center for Ecological Technology (CET), a Massachusetts based non-profit, currently has funding from the US EPA to provide free technical assistance on mercury-containing lamp management to municipalities, businesses and institutions. If you are already recycling, CET can help you address issues like proper storage, regulatory compliance, and may be able to suggest ways to reduce your recycling costs. If you do not have a recycling program, CET can help you get started. For more information about CET services, contact Lorenzo Macaluso at 413-218-1543 or lorenzom@cetonline.org, or visit CET's website: www.cetonline.org/FarmBusiness/fluor_bulbrecycling.htm

Lorenzo Macaluso is a Waste Management Specialist for the Center for Ecological Technology (CET). CET is a Massachusetts based non-profit organization that has been helping businesses, institutions and municipalities manage waste responsibly for over 27 years.

Subscription Information

EPP Buyer Updates are published by the Environmentally Preferable Products Purchasing Program at the MA Operational Services Division. Visit us online, subscribe and unsubscribe at <http://www.mass.gov/epp>.

FAQs

Should we throw away the low-mercury fluorescent lamps?

The short answer to this question is, surprisingly, "no." The reason is that the low-mercury mercury lamps still do contain mercury. Sometimes they contain less mercury than regular fluorescent lamps, but the quantity may still be significant. Manufacturers are allowed to instruct users to discard the lamps because they passed the TCLP (read as "tee-clip") test that simulates how much mercury would leach out of the lamp if it were landfilled (as opposed to how much mercury is actually contained in the lamp). In order to pass the test, some manufacturers use additives that inhibit the release of mercury in the test conditions. TCLP may not be a good indicator of mercury emissions in the cases when lamps are landfilled in conditions different from those used in the test or when lamps are not landfilled but incinerated. Thus the best way to handle mercury containing lamps, "regular" or low-mercury, is to recycle them.

Diesel Retrofits (*continued*)

Many states, countries, cities and towns across the nation have implemented diesel anti-idling, retrofitting and replacement programs. Some Massachusetts cities and towns are participating in [U.S. EPA's Clean School Bus USA](#) Program which aims to reduce engine idling and provides opportunities to retrofit or even replace the buses to reduce their emissions.

That's why the new statewide contract **VEH71, Diesel Engine Emission Control Retrofits and Related Services**, cannot be timelier. VEH71 contractors help their customers reduce the emissions of harmful particulates from diesel-powered vehicles and construction equipment by retrofitting the engines. The two contractors hit the ground running and are already working with the Clean School Bus USA communities across the state. A third supplier is scheduled to be added to the contract in August 2005.

According to a recent report by [Environmental Defense](#), diesel retrofits are an incredibly cost-effective way of reducing air pollution. For every dollar spent on retrofits, one can expect \$12 in health benefits.

This contract and the types of emission control technologies available will be discussed in-depth at the EPP Vendor Fair on November 2. Register to attend online at www.mass.gov/epp/events.htm!